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A publication prepared by the Office of Education is one of a series of four which discuss the education of disadvantaged children. Focusing on grades four, five, and six, this document presents some general background material on the disadvantaged and notes some promising practices. Also included are brief descriptions of special programs in Boston, Chicago, New York, Pittsburgh, and San Diego, and three student-motivating techniques are mentioned. A bibliography lists 38 references. (NH)

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DISADVANTAGED
CHILDREN SERIES
No. 3

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

OE–35068

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Educating Disadvantaged Children in the Middle Grades

UD 007 157

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DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN Series

No. 1. *Educating Disadvantaged Children Under Six*
(Nursery and Kindergarten)

No. 2. *Educating Disadvantaged Children in the Primary Years*
(Kindergarten Through Grade 3)

No. 3. *Educating Disadvantaged Children in the Middle Grades*
(Grades 4 Through 6)

No. 4. *Administration of Elementary School Programs for Disadvantaged Children*

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EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

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FOREWORD

SCHOOLS ACROSS THE NATION are faced with the problem of providing educational opportunities for disadvantaged children to enable them to attain an education comparable to that of other children in our society. To accomplish this, compensations must be found for the limitations of their environment which handicap them in meeting school expectations.

School administrators in the most severely affected large cities—realizing the scope and implication of the problem and aware, too, of the schools' responsibility for developing both academic and citizenship skills and attitudes—are attempting to find ways to educate these children effectively.

During the spring of 1964, staff members of the Elementary School Organization Section of the U. S. Office of Education visited 16 large cities[1] which have this problem and a program to cope with it. They observed practices used in dealing with disadvantaged children from 3 to 11 years old. In addition, the Office of Education sponsored a conference which benefited from the consultant services of two outstanding researchers—Dr. Robert Hess, chairman of the Committee on Human Development, University of Chicago, and Dr. Lassar Gotkin, senior research associate, New York Medical College—and two representative administrators—Miss Mary Adams, assistant superintendent of schools in charge of elementary education in Baltimore City Schools, and Dr. Rebecca Winton, director of early childhood education in the New York City Public Schools. Provisions, techniques, and practices identified in both the visits and the conference are reported in the Disadvantaged Children Series, consisting of four interrelated brochures: *Educating Disadvantaged Children Under Six, Educating Disadvantaged Children in the Primary Years* (kindergarten through grade 3); *Educating Disadvantaged Children in the Middle Grades* (grades 4 through 6); and *Adminis-*

[1] Cities visited: Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Denver, Detroit, Los Angeles, New Haven, New York, Oakland, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Diego, San Francisco, and Washington, D. C.

tration of Elementary School Programs for Disadvantaged Children. This publication reports on programs found useful with children approximately 9 to 11 years old.

The Office of Education acknowledges the cooperation of the school systems, teachers, and consultants who contributed so generously to this study.

FRED F. BEACH
Director, Elementary and Secondary
Organization and Administration Branch

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INTRODUCTION

COMING MAINLY FROM DEPRESSED URBAN AREAS, thousands of children each year enter school in the United States with severe educational disadvantages. Finding themselves unequal to school expectations, they become discouraged and drop out of school as early as the law permits. As a result, they increase the burden of unrealized potentialities in society. School systems attempting to stem this loss are studying possible programs for increasing the school success of these children who are both below the present age for school entrance and within the school years. (20, 21)[1]

The weight of this problem falls heavily upon the large cities. With the recent influx of rural families of low economic levels into urban areas, the number of children from disadvantaged neighborhoods approaches one-third of a city's total child population. (35) This increase has changed—frequently within less than a school year—the characteristics of pupil population in schools of the "inner city." Existing curriculum and methods of teaching which have proved effective with other children are ineffective with these children.

School administrators realize that, if these boys and girls are to achieve an adequate education and at an age comparable with that of other children, certain changes must take place, such as modification of the curriculum, methods of teaching, and school-parent relations. It may require modification of school organization as well.

School systems are assisted in operating these programs by special funds from foundations, pri-

[1] Numbers in parentheses are keyed to the references in the bibliography.

marily but not solely the Ford Foundation, and by local, State, and Federal funds.[2] When foundations and school systems work in cooperation, it is usually the role of the school system to furnish the space, most of the equipment, and supplies; help select the staff; and help plan and supervise the programs. Voluntary organizations and institutions—such as League, the Young Men's Christian Association, and churches, the Council of Jewish Women, the Junior Young Women's Christian Association; and secondary schools and nearby colleges and universities, as well as interested individuals—cooperate to provide aides for teachers and tutors for children.

Many educators, encouraged by the recent widespread interest, and bulwarked by research evidence which brings into clearer focus the nature of the problem, feel that the profession can ultimately deal with it. The significant questions are *what changes* and *what additional provisions* will be required, and *how* these may be achieved. The present brochure offers suggestions which may be helpful in improving certain changes must take place—such as modifica- the education of 9- to 11-year-old children.

[2] At the time of the visit, Ford Foundation funds were used in 11 of the 16 cities visited: Baltimore, Chicago, District of Columbia, Detroit, Los Angeles, New Haven, New York, Oakland, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and San Francisco. California and New York had made available State funds; Cleveland and Washington, D. C., had secured Federal funds. Among these cities, by the spring of 1965, 11 had already received funds from the Community Action Program of the Economic Opportunity Act for the improvement of existing school programs or for extensions, notably for young children.

EDUCATION IN THE MIDDLE GRADES

RESEARCHERS AND TEACHERS OF CHILDREN who have experienced prolonged deprivation agree that the most apparent handicap to their school progress is the absence of an adequate verbal language with which to comprehend and clarify ideas and communicate with others at school. Underlying this deficiency are limitations in experience which have resulted in restricted conceptual development, lack of confidence, limited ability to interact with others, and deprivation in cultural understandings which are part of the common heritage of most of our children.

Researchers and experienced teachers agree that these children *can* learn if adaptations are made in the curriculum and ways of teaching are devised to reach them. They also agree that most parents want their children to learn and that parents will help when they understand what they can do.

Goals

The middle grades (grades 4, 5, and 6) receiving these children singly or in numbers, have the task of adapting the school organization, curriculum, and teaching methods to motivate these children, and to provide the continuity, guidance, and special help each child needs to enable him to achieve and to look forward to continuing his education. The necessity to make these adaptations puts to a new test the ideal the profession has long had—that the school and school system recognize and deal with differences among children. For the first time schools are challenged to show what they can do to help children learn when the home and out-of-school environment give little or no support to school efforts, and to show as well what can be done to secure or develop the

cooperation of parents, particularly those who are "hard-to-reach."

The Environment

The school environment from entrance to graduation should encourage and facilitate learning. Schools are adept at providing such an environment for most middle-class children, children who are well prepared and motivated to learn. For severely disadvantaged children, however, designing such an environment is a highly complex task, partly because research furnishes so little evidence on how mental handicaps which are due to environmental deprivation can be overcome, and partly because the ways which must be used to judge the progress of children are, in most schools, revolutionary. Emphasis must be on the positive and on encouragement to face up to "next steps" with determination to achieve. *Small victories in achievement must be rewarded.* A few of these children will use initiative and work with increasing independence. These will need to be given opportunities to do all they can. Many more, however, will need not only to have the work measured in small steps in what appears to be sequential order, but also to *see* their own growth in skills, ideas, and power and to know that their growth is satisfactory to the teacher, the principal, and their parents.

To accommodate individual growth, classrooms must have a wide range of materials related to subject areas and to the interests of children. Enrollment in a class must be small enough to enable the teacher to know the strengths, weaknesses, and needs of each child; to have the time to counsel, guide, and encourage each individually; and to talk with parents, the principal, and others who are responsible for the child's well-being. Grade standards and grading must be set aside, and teachers should be challenged to use their ingenuity to help school systems find successful ways of dealing with children severely disadvantaged by their environment.

The Teacher

What society expects of a teacher in any school program is pointed out in the following quotation:

> Society . . . asks first of all that they [teachers] inculcate in children all of the custom and tradition that goes into making good citizens. . . . Secondly . . . to help children absorb new learning that will simultaneously benefit that society and enhance individual prospects of success. . . . More than the representative of any other group in society, the teacher is molding the future in the minds of the young . . . the good teacher should never grow indifferent. . . . (7)

These words have more than ordinary significance for teachers of disadvantaged children, for the writer, Dr. Loren C. Eiseley, chairman of the Department of the History of Philosophy of Science, Graduate School, University of Pennsylvania, grew up in conditions some might call disadvantaged. His implicit faith in the evolution of a man through self and school education would give sensitive teachers hope and insight.

A supervisor who was interviewed concerning the important elements of a program said, "Nothing good happens without skilled, interested, creative, open-minded teachers. The teacher makes the difference. Teachers do not always need to be gifted, but they must be good." Another, in attempting to distinguish between the role of materials and the role of the teacher, said, "It is always a *person* who perceives and helps others."

Necessary attributes of a teacher at any level are high regard for children, insight into what makes them "tick," and persistent faith that deep within each child lies the ability to respond if only he—the teacher—can be skillful enough to reach him. These attributes are particularly necessary for teachers of middle-grade disadvantaged children, especially those who have not made the best use of opportunities the school offers. Inspired with the feeling that where others have failed he will succeed, the teacher seeks new ways and goes the extra mile to interest these pupils.

The teacher must be professionally equipped to detect strengths and weaknesses; to understand growth and learning; to make use of the powerful peer-group tendency characteristic of middle-grade children; to modify his approaches to find those which are successful with individuals or groups; to introduce activities which appeal to various avenues of learning: visual, auditory, motor, emotional, and intellectual; to provide for wide experiences in the

sciences, humanities, and the arts; to seek services for the physical, emotional, and intellectual needs of children in the class which require more help than he can give; to know and be able to enrich the curriculum with resources available both inside and outside the school; and to solicit the interest and cooperation of parents. He must show interest in and, if possible, take part in planning the after-school, Saturday, and summer opportunities extended to middle-grade children, coordinating these efforts with his own teaching.

He must be equipped to give children the day-to-day guidance needed and to stimulate them to aspire as high as their potential seems to justify. He must be a master of patience and adaptation, highly flexible, but with the strength it takes to invite children's respect and give them needed security.

Most teachers must have help in understanding the major concepts in subject matter areas, in selecting relevant subject matter content, and in learning to plan small sequential steps. It is essential that they eventually be given responsibility and encouragement to tailor the program for individuals and groups, and their efforts to do so must be rewarded by the interest and approval of supervisors and administrators.

Improving Children's Personality

A realistic educator working with inner-city children emphasized, "You don't have to love them, but you do have to respect them; not only to respect them, but let them know you respect them." (8) This respect, he indicates, must be extended to boys and girls despite the fact that their personal characteristics may run counter to the school's culture: unacceptable table manners, unkemptness in person and clothing, easy anger, unwarranted aggressions, unsuitable language, ignorance, prejudices, and ability to make more errors in spelling and grammar than seem possible. Researchers and teachers agree that respect is the foundation upon which anticipated progress is based.

How difficult this sometimes is was pointed up by a highly regarded teacher who has worked for many

years in an inner school in both the second and sixth grades. "It is hard sometimes to like them in the sixth grade. It's not so bad when they're little; all young children are cute. But when they get to be 10, 11, or 12, it's harder. Something happens to them. Some of them become so impudent without any apparent reason—and it's hard to get them to be interested." This teacher realized, however, that, like them or not, respect them she must; and her frankness in noting the changes in her own attitude as well as in the children's behavior made it easier for her to look at and deal with the problem.

It is pointed out repeatedly in schools and by researchers that "something happens to them." Many, for instance, are the victims of unstable self-images which shift with the mood of the environment. In a setting where the child is well received, his ego-image escalates; in another where he is suspect or rejected, his ego-image falls. Teachers must seek ways to build favorable self-images. They have found it good to use the given name (not a nickname) and to look directly at a child when addressing him. An occasional friendly, personalized comment is reassuring. The friendly response to gracious gestures, however, may be slow in coming; for in some cases, the school has contributed to the child's instability and the present teacher is on trial to prove herself worthy of trust. Involving a child in school activities, praising him when it is deserved, and using mirrors, photographs, and voice records to call attention to self are worthwhile.

Because the daily lives of families of these children are necessarily focused on immediate needs, these boys and girls have developed short-sightedness. They have learned to concentrate on minute-by-minute, day-by-day existence. For them—as for their parents—it is survival *today* that is important. Survival tomorrow will be cared for tomorrow. Beyond that, the future is too remote to be real, and motivation toward anything so ethereal as future success is hard to grasp.

A psychiatrist who has studied inner-city children sizes it up this way:

> In effect, these children learn to negotiate the jungle of the slums. If we put 100 children from the inner city and 100 children from the suburbs into the slums of another city,

> our children wouldn't make it because they haven't learned something that inner-city children have. Some of the things inner-city children have learned are terrible. . . . But on the other hand, there is a certain kind of know-how for survival, and this is an intellectual art, not just an exercise in an Oliver Twist environment. (36)

Success motivations, say teachers, are hard to cultivate. Their environment characteristically is not replete with images of success, as is the environment of middle-class children. Many fathers are absent so that it is largely a maternal society. If fathers are at home, they are likely to be unemployed or employed at menial labor which does not pay well. Mothers, who in most cases carry full responsibility for the family, work long hours at menial labor outside the home, while their own homes are entrusted to older children or are neglected; and when they return home fatigued, they have little time to converse with their children because they must face family chores.

Older peer success models are also scarce, for the few whose careers begin to show promise leave the area. The "hero" models presented to them at school, which appeal to middle-class children in general, are too remote and their successes too far beyond the reach of these children to cause even a ripple in their aspirations. Because of this, many schools are trying to find models capable of touching these children, within their "grasp" and within their daily vision, such as firemen, policemen, gardeners, window washers, and construction, laundry and restaurant workers. Attention is devoted to broadening a child's aspirations when he seems capable of it and is ready to take advantage of guidance, by such activities as inviting back to the school children and youth who are successful in high school, college, or the work world; arranging visits to work centers to see racial and social counterparts at work; and inviting worthy citizens to the school.

Characteristically, these children deal in the concrete, not in the abstract. They recognize *things* and enjoy seeing what can be done with them. Their approach being mainly motor (or physical) and visual, they size up and move into or withdraw from a situation readily. They find little or no satisfaction in talking or reading about fictitious or remote situ-

ations. Their communication is likely to consist of a combination of gestures, physical attitudes, and monosyllabic words or phrases, completely understood by their neighborhood peers but difficult for their teachers to interpret. Conclusions are likely to be just as narrowly focused, applying to the specific person, object, or event and ungeneralized beyond the immediate and its relation to the self. A policeman, for instance, is a "cop who catches us," rather than a man to keep law and order—a concept most middle-class children cultivate by the time they are in the second grade. The policeman is not seen by inner-city children in relation to the general good, but as a deterrent to personal activity. So conditioned are these children to this life-style that they come slowly—if at all—to consider generalities in a broader frame of reference.

These boys and girls, however, have assets which have developed from their way of life. The apathy shown at school disappears outside. Many have fended for themselves since early childhood; many have had years of responsibility for the care of younger members of the family. Many girls—and some boys—have responsibility for family purchases, meal-planning and cooking, and general homemaking. They have learned to "hold their own," to act quickly and decisively in street and home play, even in brawls. Habits of action and responsibility are there to aid the child if he can be led to see school achievement as something to be desired.

Providing for Continuity Through Organization and Instruction

Children who have suffered severe educational disadvantages show strong deviations from customary school expectancies. No matter how good the primary program is, many evidences of deprivation will still be evident in children in the middle grades.

In 1968 a minute percentage of children reaching the middle grades will have begun their schooling at four years old in nursery school. (20) Some will have had one year of kindergarten; but the majority will have begun school in the first grade, without any preliminary start, and with six or seven years'

preschool accumulation of all those characteristics which accrue from severe handicaps: fear, distrust, withdrawal, timidity, aggression, nonverbal language, lack of verbal communicative powers, and narrowly limited experience to draw on for development of conceptual understanding. It will be difficult—even impossible—for most of them to keep pace with children who have had a much better "head start." Each fall as they return to school, they will need much more painstaking help to pick up the threads necessary to make progress, and they will probably require continuous and extra help each succeeding school year.

In the middle grades, customary expectations in the skills of reading, writing, spelling, mathematics, social studies, and science must be set aside. The program should be tailored to the needs of the individual and/or the group, and progress through the 3-year-unit of grades 4, 5, and 6 should be paced and guided individually. Unless help is extended, most of these children will not be ready to move to grade 7 at the end of grade 6. Even with help, some may need more time in the elementary school. This should be faced squarely and accomplished so as to benefit the particular child personally and academically, leaving no stigma and imbuing him with added faith and interest in continuing education.

Organization.—The following principles or guidelines may help school leaders organize grades 4 to 6 to facilitate the educational progress of these children:

- *The principle of individual differences.* The size of the school or school unit and the way the school is administered should make it possible for each child to be known and understood as a worthy individual.
- *The principle of flexibility.* No matter what the organization, it should recognize the child's beginning point and should then facilitate, not obstruct, his natural stride in learning.
- *The principle of interrelatedness in growth.* A child's progress should be judged on the full spectrum of important components: his physical status and needs, social characteristics and competencies, rate and style of learning, and

emotional poise, as well as his scholastic achievement or promise.

- *The principle of harmony in the work setting.* A child should be placed where he can achieve and can establish satisfying human relationships. Teacher-child relationships should be harmonious; child-child relationships should make it possible to develop friendships. The work should be challenging but within reach without extrinsic motivation such as competition, grades, awards, punishment, or failure. Materials and activities should be suited to his developmental and academic needs.

- *The principle of consistency among adults responsible for him.* The child's important adults (parents, principal, teachers, and others who influence the school) should agree about where he is and what should be expected of him both in achievement and behavior.

Some school staffs claim they are able to maintain these favorable conditions for children within a graded heterogeneous setting. Others claim they do well for children with homogeneous grouping based on one or a few characteristics. Still others favor an organization based on a local version of "team teaching." Many think the "ungraded or nongraded unit" with its provision for individual progress can be best adapted to the irregularities of growth and learning. Each of these ways of organizing has deficits and strengths for children; each depends for its success upon the professional understanding and enthusiasm of the teachers involved; and each is fraught with the dangers of rigidity when teacher-interest or creativeness and administrative understanding and support lag. The test of any plan is whether it accommodates the most important elements of each child's growth and learning.

Instruction.—The program for disadvantaged middle-graders should contain the breadth of subject matter provided for other children, such as language arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening), mathematics, science, social studies, health, physical education, music, and art. (3, 10, 15, 37) But at every point, it must be practical to his level of learning and to his needs.

The following principles of good education and of growth and learning apply to all children, the deprived as well as the affluent.

- Children must be interested in what they are to learn.
- They must have purpose in learning.
- There must be a basis in experience for understanding the new.
- What is put to use is best remembered.
- Ideas that are interrelated are more readily available for future use.
- It takes time to learn; each child learns according to his own timetable.

Selecting Experiences

Because of the personalized, immediate, active—and often responsible—approach which characterizes most disadvantaged middle-grade children, and because of the limits of their experience, schools have found it difficult to devise a curriculum which would have meaning for them. Books, especially those which deal with middle-class situations outside their experience or whose plots are mild-mannered, leave these young people untouched. Even the more docile among them, who want to do what the teacher wants them to do, have difficulty interpreting the values which are implied in the books. The best they can do is to attempt to make the response the teacher expects.

Instruction through audiovisual means is often effective because the child witnesses an action taking place and does not depend upon verbal communication. A degree of identification is established upon which the teacher may hope to build further common understanding. Pictures, photographs, films, slides, stereoscopes, overhead projectors, recordings, tapes, and other audiovisual media help these children develop a better understanding of a world of which they know little.

Trips are proving invaluable because they not only expand knowledge but also offer multistimulating possibilities and many-faceted avenues for value-

building. Planning to go; mapping the trip; dressing properly and grooming for the trip; taking responsibility for one's own safety and the safety and rights of others; observing en route and at destination; taking note of important items observed; asking questions of the guide and listening to the replies; choosing what and who shall be photographed; remembering "until we get back to class"; discussing, recalling, writing, and planning what is to be done next time—this is the very meat of experience. This—even in spite of child resistance—gives zest to living and learning. Many schools, from kindergarten through every grade, make use of well-selected, well-planned, well-conducted trips with parents or volunteer workers as co-escorts. These trips are skillfully followed up in the classrooms.

Improving Ability To Communicate

Dr. Walter Loban, a respected researcher, after 11 years' study of the language development of children from various socioeconomic levels, from kindergarten to high school, points out several "most significant" features to "emerge" from the study. (17, 18) Since these features have strong implications for teaching the disadvantaged, and are also borne out in the schools observed, they are quoted here:

> Since formal instruction in grammar—whether linguistic or traditional—seems to be an ineffective method of improving expression at this level of development, one can conclude the elementary pupils need many opportunities to grapple with their thought in situations where they have someone to whom they wish to communicate successfully. Instruction can best aid the pupils' expression when individuals or small groups with similar problems are helped to see how their own expression can be improved. This instruction would take the form of identifying elements which strengthen or weaken communication, increase or lower precision of thought, clarify or blur meanings. For the pupils the approach would usually be through models, meaning, and reasoning rather than through the application of rules. On the other hand, the teacher would need to be aware of structural problems behind the semantic difficulties and would be guided by research in determining what to emphasize or to ignore. Inductive reasoning toward generalizations would be more frequently encouraged than deductive applications to sentences not of the pupils' own creating. Occasionally the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of important ideas read or heard (e.g., re-

> corded on tape) would be examined as a profitable reversal of self-expression through speaking and writing. Attention to structure at the expense of emphasizing successful communication could be a dangerous contribution of research not carefully interpreted.
>
> . . . Competence in the spoken language appears to be a necessary base for competence in writing and reading. Modern equipment for recording and studying the spoken word makes possible marked advances in such instruction. The persistently parallel variation of language proficiency and socioeconomic status should not be overlooked. It appears entirely possible that language proficiency may be culturally as well as individually determined. If children reared in families at the least favored socioeconomic positions receive a restricted language experience, if their early linguistic environment stresses only limited features of language potential, such children may indeed be at a disadvantage in school and in the world beyond school.

Practically all disadvantaged children, having had a late start in cultivating an adequate verbal language, still need a great deal of help in the middle and upper grades in developing verbal facility. Many of them have by now established a double code of language—one to be used in school and a "public" language to be used out of school, at home, and on the streets.[3] Some have developed facility in out-of-school language since opportunities to use it are more frequent and often more emotionally charged than those in school.

A recent study points out the danger in considering all disadvantaged children to be without verbal facility. On the contrary, some speak English—even "school English"—very well, and some who fumble when they attempt to communicate in school English speak fluently in a foreign language or in a colloquial, hard-to-understand version of English which is spoken at home. A skilled teacher, the writer indicates, may turn these languages to curricular advantage, utilizing them for enrichment for other children. (38) Eventually, however, the teacher will need to help all children develop fluency in the language which is used to gain an education and to participate in the business work world.

Whatever language is used, a teacher should at

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[3] Robert Hess, chairman of the Committee on Human Development, University of Chicago, in an Office of Education Conference on the Education of the Disadvantaged, June 18-19, 1964.

first accept it uncritically and encourage free-flowing conversation. As rapport is established, however, a well-planned developmental program becomes just as essential. Its structure should not force the teacher or the child into formalized, rigid, and restricting work; it should, instead, open and keep open creative ways of studying, learning, and teaching.

Dr. Loban lists the following as the most frequently found characteristics related to conventional usage and grammar:

> Problems with use of verbs prove to be the most frequent kind of deviation from conventional usage in the elementary school.
>
> Lack of agreement between subject and predicate, particularly in the third person singular, proves to be the major difficulty in the use of verbs. Consistency of verb tense is another difficulty. The trends in this study show that the difficulty increases for Negro boys in grades one through three and decreases for Negro girls, provided that these Negro children came from homes using a southern Negro dialect.
>
> For Negro subjects with southern background, using appropriately the verb *to be* proves to be twelve times as troublesome as for northern Caucasian or Negro subjects.
>
> Subjects who are rated as most proficient in language are also those who manifest the most sensitivity to the conventions of language. The subject who, despite unconventional usage, exhibits verbal linguistic skill is the exception. (18)

It helps the teacher in a middle grade to be familiar with the early speech patterns of children because much of the language he will hear resembles these. He will note the limited vocabulary; the groping for words to express ideas; the extensive use of nouns, active verbs, sensory-attached adjectives, and simple incomplete phrases and sentences; the indistinctness or omission of word beginnings and endings; the mixed-up use of pronouns and verb forms; the difficulty in sentence sequence; and the absence of figures of speech. The teacher's task is to develop clearer, richer, and more accurate speech without driving children into reticence. Some teachers find a mixture of study and practice in life situations—with audiovisual aids, games, humor, and fun—to be helpful.

Dr. Hess [4] points out that it is extremely difficult to change the speech habits of children, and that the conditions under which a change is attempted must duplicate closely the situation requiring the desired or improved speech. That is—if the teacher wishes to encourage courteous, correct, and rich speech—not only must he demonstrate these attributes, he must also radiate the social setting which produces these, and his own manner must be so convincing that children will emulate him even without consciously wishing to do so. It is essential, also, says Dr. Hess, to work with friendship groups or, due to negative influences, the child will lose his interest in improving.

Many activities natural to the school setting can be used to provide models of good speech and stimulate interest in improvement, such as keeping card records of words learned and using these in games; listening to well-written and well-read children's literature; taking turns reading the "speaking" parts in stories; reading selections from the newspaper; telling about an event or reading a short selection to younger children, their classmates, or parents; and dramatizing stories with strong characterizations.

Tape recorders are effective in producing speech changes. The magical possibilities seem to capture the imagination, and hearing one's own voice first stirs a note of disbelief, then pride. Boys and girls strive to speak well on tape. The teacher who has developed skill in using tapes has a stimulating resource for giving directions to groups of children, for educating them to listen, and for encouraging good speech.

Conversation is essential, especially when the speaker has the responsibility of making his listeners understand him—that is, when the teacher does not act as interpreter. Such experiences as the following are constructive: dramatizing original or adapted situations or stories; reading aloud, children taking turns reading dialogue expressively; and role playing in order to learn and practice common courtesies of the culture, such as saying *please, thank you, excuse me,* and introducing a friend to the teacher or principal.

Some direct teaching is necessary, too. Methods

[4] Contributed in the discussion at the conference on the education of disadvantaged children (see footnote 3 above).

suggested in any recent language textbook can be adapted by the teacher. He must, however, select the content to fit the needs of the child or group. Vocabularies will need to be extended—by interesting, painstaking, and often repetitive ways—to include words and phrases useful to the children. All words introduced should derive from the school program or from experience rather than from predetermined lists. Practice should be in the context of use, emphasizing meaning and speech rhythm as opposed to isolated drill which depends on the child to make his own transfer to use. Teachers developing vocabulary and meaningful word study find that, while errors persist in pronunciation and usage in earlier-learned language, what is learned in school is very likely to be used more correctly.

The following example shows some of the problems encountered by a teacher in helping bilingual children learn English. Five children sat at a table with the teacher discussing baseball.

Teacher: "Do you play after school?"
Boy: "Yes. We play softball."
Teacher: "What position?"
Boy: "Second base."
Teacher: "What happened last week?"
Boy: "———— catched the ball."
Teacher: "He put the bat to the ball."
Boy: "And he swinged."
Teacher: "He struck the ball."
Boy: "And run to first base."
Teacher (to another boy): "How far did you get?"
Boy: "Second base."
Teacher: "What would it be called if *you* were tagged?"
Boy: "Out."
Teacher: "If he misses the ball three times, he is out."

The teacher stepped to a chart and wrote: *bat, ball, batter, base, first, second, third, home.*

Teacher: "Where does everyone want to be?"
Children: "Home."
Teacher: "What position does everyone want?"
Children: "Pitcher."

The teacher wrote *pitcher, strikes, out* and led the

children in reading these words. Children, in sentences, said what they liked:

"I like to be a softball player."
"I like to hit the ball and run."
"I like to be on first base."

While priority is given to the development of oral language, written communication is important to individual competency and future education. Every available occasion should be used to develop writing—such as letters of invitation, acknowledgment, or appreciation; announcements; plays, verse, and stories; records or diaries of events; reports to convey information to others; and notetaking and outlining as ways to aid memory and orderliness. Testing, too, should frequently require independent composition rather than response by checking or single-word answers.

Improving Ability To Read

Continuous growth in both *ability to read* and *desire to read* is crucial to academic progress. Reading materials—such as books, magazines, and newspapers—are not a regular part of the environment in disadvantaged homes and are, therefore, not easily accessible to children outside school. Thus growth in reading power and reading habits depends heavily upon the availability of appropriate materials and the initiative and skill of teachers in motivating and maintaining interest from one school level to the next.

Transition from the primary school to the fourth grade is reputedly not easy, even for more advantaged children. Concerning the disadvantaged, a researcher in one city said, "There is a drop in reading in the middle grades. These teachers must learn to tolerate the noise and confusion of growth activities. Reading should not be a 'drudge' process. There should be shelves of books in every class for kids and free time for reading. The middle grades should be an enchanting time for children."

Providing for reading progress in the instructional program is easier when the teacher has records of each child's present achievement together with indications of improvements needed. As in language instruction, the teacher should be familiar with the

reading characteristics of young children and understand how reading is taught in the primary grades. He may find it necessary to dip down as low as first- or second-grade levels to meet the needs of some children. In some schools visited, study and cooperation were under way to help middle-grade teachers acquire understanding of the teaching of reading in earlier grades.

Teachers emphasized the need for the school to be richly stocked with books, magazines, and reference materials to meet the interests and ability levels of all children in the class. Single and multiple copies of trade books and basic readers should be on hand in the classroom to make them easily accessible to children.

Teachers use various methods of grouping children for reading instruction. Each method has strengths and weaknesses which the teacher must understand if he is to help children make their best progress.

Some teachers use an individualized method of teaching reading. Each child chooses his own books from a wide selection, and paces himself through the selected book. The teacher works with each child to note progress, problems, and needs and makes suggestions on such technicalities as phrasing and word attack skills or comprehension and appreciation of literature. Small groups are called together to give children opportunity to share their reading or to receive help. The teacher keeps complete records of each child's progress, needs, and interests. This method is dependent on the teacher's knowledge of how to teach reading, ability to interweave the technical elements into the personalized individual conferences, and skill in classroom management.

Teaching by ability groups is employed in many classrooms. Most commonly, the class is divided into three groups—able, average, and less able readers; and the children are guided through a basic reading series at these three separate paces. Generally, groups not with the teacher fill in a workbook which accompanies the reading or prepare for the next lesson.

Similarly, a relatively new way of organizing is by reading achievement or "reading levels." Some large schools divide the children (all sixth grades or combinations of grades 5 and 6 or 4, 5, and 6) in sev-

eral rooms according to levels of reading achievement.

Ability or achievement grouping assumes that all children in the group are the same—in interest, pace, and ability. Such an assumption has long since been disparaged by the facts of individual differences. Waste of time is often prevalent in groups formed on these bases, because of overlearning, boredom, or too great difficulty.

In any reading plan, too much time spent exclusively on a basic reading series narrows the program and deprives children of opportunities to browse among and learn from the wonderful world of books. Especially is this true if children are required to follow the workbook mechanically rather than on the basis of identified needs.

Routine use of commercially packaged lessons now available to teachers deprives children of making choices and the teacher of the necessity to study and utilize children's interests. Since most selections are abstracted, children may have little opportunity really to know an author and his work. This could be a disappointment to some comprehensive readers and could deteriorate into mechanical and impersonalized reading to fulfill a requirement.

For disadvantaged children, no one method seems to be the answer. Although all require much individual technical assistance, some may first need to listen to stories read entirely or in part by the teacher or a skilled classmate or on a tape recorder before they can absorb technicalities. Some may need to continue an oral reading program much longer than others. Some may require subtle techniques to motivate them to read beyond the daily requirement. In one city, a supervisor said, "They need phonics and oral reading more than anything, and that's where we are putting the emphasis." Another supervisor said, "They need to learn to enjoy reading. We have many reading clubs, and teachers and children enjoy books together."

Following are some activities observed to improve children's ability to read:

- Children from several classes or grades reorganized for approximately an hour daily on the basis of reading achievement or "levels."
- Reading groups within a class organized for daily teaching on the basis of reading achievement.

- Reading groups within a class organized on the basis of common needs or interests.
- Individualized reading groups formed in the classroom to fulfill some immediate purpose.
- Reading clubs organized to meet during and after school.
- Small groups organized to receive special help from team teachers.
- Classes across a grade level in a school organized as teams with one teacher designated team leader.
- Remedial programs conducted during and after school hours in which extensive audiovisual aids, some teacher-made, are used.
- Remedial reading teachers assigned to one or several schools to work with children having serious reading difficulty.
- Reading consultants assigned to one or several schools to demonstrate newer techniques of teaching children.
- Groups of 12 to 16 children from a given grade level receiving the help of a special teacher to stimulate interest and develop potentialities along all lines of the language arts.
- Supplementary teachers assigned to teach groups of third- and fourth-grade children who need help in reading but not at the clinical level.
- Multicultural materials developed by the central office or individual school particularly to increase knowledge and appreciation of the Mexican-American and Negro contributions and culture.
- Overhead projectors and controlled readers used to provide reading instruction to groups of high achieving fifth graders.
- Children encouraged to exchange letters with authors who live nearby.
- Librarians stimulating interest in reading by effective use of bulletin board, by contests to see what room has the most library cards, and by granting a book as a prize to children who read more than 10 books.

Reading in the content areas.—The transfer of reading ability to the content areas is of concern to all teachers, and the problem is increased when different teachers are responsible for instruction in reading and instruction in the content areas. For children whose cultural heritage condemns them to struggle for any progress in skill or knowledge, the problem of transfer can be exceedingly confusing and frustrating.

Helping them to understand the interrelationships

in curriculum areas depends on coordination of teaching. In self-contained classrooms, coordination is simplified, for the teacher may easily draw on the various subject matter areas for developing vocabulary, phrasing, sentence reading, and chart building, and in selecting or constructing materials for study. He can even incorporate ideas and suggestions from the work of special teachers of art, music, and physical education who come to the classroom. Where several teachers instruct the same children, however, coordination of instruction depends on their planning together, an activity which makes demands on time and cooperative ability. But without such cooperative planning, these children meet obstacles which they cannot overcome. All aspects of the language arts program must be coordinated with the work of the entire school day. How this is done in many schools is illustrated in the following example from a school visited.

> A central office supervisor, concerned because children would not read the content material, invited a group of 20 teachers and their student teachers to hear two junior high school teachers talk on a topic (lumber, in this case) and to demonstrate with visual objects. She asked the teachers to state as quickly as possible in single words, phrases, or short sentences the ideas they had heard, and she recorded these as "random notes" on the chalkboard. They then helped her construct an outline and divided into small groups to write a cooperative summary of what they had heard. In reading these summaries, they emphasized vocabulary.
>
> Using different topics, this process was repeated at five successive meetings. The teachers in turn used the process with children and were enthusiastic about results. These teachers then trained others. Modifications and elaborations of the process form the basis of much that is now done in that city to help disadvantaged children and others as well. One teacher remarked of her class, "It's hard to find the slow children now."

In another school in that city, a teacher was assigned to work with a selected group of 12 children from grades 5 and 6 who had serious reading diffi-

culties. At the time of the visit, these children, having visited the airport, were engaged in reading "stories" they had written about what the various workers did. The teacher had these reproduced and each child had the full set of 12. When a Spanish-speaking girl who had been in the school only a few weeks read hers, such was the rapport that the children burst into applause.

Charts of "Space Flight Heroes" were on display in the classroom. A chart headed *Written Work* listed the questions, "Have I kept good margins? Is handwriting neat and legible? Is my sentence a complete thought? Have I used capital letters? Is my punctuation correct? Have I indented paragraphs? Are the words spelled correctly? Are there any incorrect forms?" The teacher explained that the list had grown gradually, that "stories" were placed on the board or in everyone's hands, and that the pupils studied them together. She called attention to another chart headed *How To Write a Sentence,* with the detail: "Begin with a capital letter. End with a period, or a question mark, or an exclamation point." Another chart listed *Vocabulary Words:* "airport, restroom, newsstand, check, freight, cargo, metalworker, runway, compass, cargo-liner, flier, aviation, scissors lift, baggage cart, conveyor, belt, cargo pit, air terminal, taxiway, instruments, and baggage."

The children had made illustrations at home for a "movie" of their trip. These sequential pictures with accompanying sentences were shown to the visitor, whose enthusiasm elicited the question, "Do you want to hear our 'Trip to the Moon'?" This proved to be a play composed and taped by the children. They sent a man to the moon and brought him back with scientific accuracy that would astonish even a space expert. The science background was evident, and the preliminary work on vocabulary and sentence structure apparent.

Photographs of children with the hostess, pilot, teacher, and other "important personages" were displayed to raise the ego-image. These children would be ready in spirit as well as in academic skills to take their place in the regular classrooms where teachers, fired by the enthusiasm of the children, were already emulating this fine teaching.

Reading as a personal resource.—Children from disadvantaged homes know little of how reading may help fulfill personal needs; how it helps one find out what he wants to know about animals, people, things, and places; how it brings the news of events from "outside"—the city, Nation, and world; how it brings the thoughts and opinions of others; how, through both prose and poetry, it opens up a world of beauty; and how it can transport one from the here and now to other times and places, even into space. Sensitive teachers and librarians help to expand and deepen these understandings through providing experiences meaningful to boys and girls. They also seek ways to broaden the interests and understandings of parents and other adults in the school neighborhood.

Among the schools visited, attempts to popularize reading were made through exhibits, fairs, and sales of used and new paperbacks; through making and exhibiting murals and posters of favorite books; by encouraging children to take books home (the losses are said to be few); by securing newspapers from a publisher, reading them at school, and then sending them home; by forming reading clubs in the library which overflow into out-of-school hours and sometimes involve adults; and by inviting and training selected older children and adults to assist in the library and with other reading activities.

Extending Conceptual Understanding

Opportunities should be provided to help these boys and girls expand their understanding of the world. Schools visited consider this most important and provide field trips to places of historic, civic, scientific, cultural, and aesthetic value, with excellent planning, execution, and followup. Among the places visited are zoos, scientific and art museums and observatories, theaters, libraries, book fairs, historic landmarks, State and local governmental centers, courts, parks, playgrounds, housing developments, airports and bus terminals, other schools in the city or environs, and occupational work activities.

Several school systems have designated special teachers to work specifically on trips: to identify and list places to be visited; help teachers make

choices; make liaison arrangements; prepare explanatory printed or mimeographed materials for teachers; accompany the group, together with the teacher and several parents; arrange for photographs; and, if time permits, assist in the followup work in the classrooms. Some museums, on the other hand, have designed services especially for children, having educational directors and teachers and, as in San Francisco, an arts and crafts area where children may round out an experience through expression. Others, such as symphony orchestras, not only invite children to special performances but also frequently take programs to the schools.

Boys and girls and the contributing groups appreciate these opportunities. After seeing a ballet performance of *The Sleeping Beauty* in a theater, a child rose spontaneously and thanked the company for inviting the class to come. When an orchestra performed in a school, the director remarked, "We've never had a more appreciative audience; and unlike some, they applauded at the right spots." When a class appeared at the Boston Statehouse, both houses applauded. Other sixth graders who had observed a court trial concluded, "We liked both the lawyers. We'll have to study the evidence."

Study in the classroom broadens the perspective of children concerning the particular function of an event or institution in the life of the community. The horizons of their own aspirations are extended by study of the work activities needed to maintain the service or institution. Further growth and learning are promoted through discussion; reading; expression in rhythm, dance, and painting; and pursuit of individual and group interests. To develop a sense of time and sequence, one class made a timeline of each trip, showing time of departure from school, important stops en route, arrival, duration, departure, and arrival at school. To orient the location of the institution visited, others made scale drawings showing its location and the route taken to reach it.

Teachers emphasize the fact that it should *never* be taken for granted that *these* children understand what they read or hear. One said,

> In reading a story that mentioned honey, I discovered that the children did not know what it was or where it came from. I brought some which we ate on crackers,

> and we observed some bees. These children know nothing about rural life, cows, barns, or grain. There's a main highway three blocks away, and they didn't know where it comes from or where it goes. We walked to it one day to watch the cars and jot down the States from which they came. Then we had a geography lesson. I don't know how much they gained, but they do talk about other places more.

Instruction must be very clear and the atmosphere relaxed enough for free discussion, including children's questions. A teacher cautioned, "But they have to know something in order to ask a question." Observing as much as possible firsthand; recapitulating the experiences in the classroom; using audio-visual materials to introduce, clarify, or reinforce the impressions gained in reading or listening; providing many opportunities for *children* to explain in discussion; and dramatizing—these activities assist in conceptual development.

In all experiences the goals of education must be kept in mind; otherwise, the activity runs the risk of drifting aimlessly or becoming "busy work." What curriculum areas are expected to contribute to the child must be well considered, and principals and teachers must have clearly in mind the outcomes to be expected. Presumably, then, each activity is planned and guided to contribute to these outcomes.

SOME PROMISING PRACTICES

IN ADDITION TO CHANGES IN THE CURRICULUM, practices to improve education for middle-grade disadvantaged children focus on organizational devices, reduction of teacher-pupil ratio, special staff assistance, school-parent relations, and summer opportunities. Some are funded by local, State, or Federal agencies; others, by outside organizations. Some are carried out by the individual school or the teacher; others, by all schools. Some occur within the school day and year; others, after school, on Saturday, and in the summer. Some are for all children; others, for children singled out on the basis of need.

Organizational Devices

Following are some changes which have been made in school organization in efforts to improve the education of disadvantaged children.

Team teaching.—In this plan, four or five teachers of varying competencies work for a part of the day with a group of 100 or more children of the same grade level, then divide them for individual or small group work according to their needs. Advantages mentioned were (*a*) the possibilities provided for working with small groups when needed, (*b*) coordination in planning, and (*c*) possibilities for pooling understanding and guidance of individual children both as persons and pupils.

Teaching teams.—In this plan, several teachers work together across a grade line in a large school with a teacher-leader who is designated to coordinate planning, testing, and services; to assist new teachers; and to work with parents. Each teacher has a class of children all day, with the exception of the leader who teaches a group half of each day, and is

freed by an assistant for "team" work the other half of each day. The team meets weekly; team leaders throughout a district also meet weekly.

Reception room.—A special room is provided where children entering the school for the first time are taught for several days or weeks as they undergo testing and study preparatory to proper placement in the school.

School library.—A room or rooms are set aside for books and other educational materials and staffed by a professional librarian. Where this is not possible, usually a bookmobile operates between the school and the source of supply.

"Overage" classes (known locally as "O" classes).—Classes are provided for children 13 and above who are not ready for high school. Children are grouped according to age and academic achievement, and enrollment in a class does not exceed 30. The program is tailored to their needs, with 40 percent of the time spent on the language arts.

Able pupils program.—Able fifth- and sixth-grade pupils from the area are brought together for a special program featuring creative writing, literature, mathematics, social studies, science, and conversational French. They remain with the same teacher during a 2-year period.

After-school activities.—A series of activities are held after school and staffed by teachers of the school, retired teachers, competent citizens, and college youth. Tutoring is provided in any needed area. Speech and reading clinics and libraries are made available.

Urban 4H programs.—In these programs children are grouped for puppetry, boys' cooking, radio, photography, and other expressed interests. A savings program is also featured.

Recreation and social centers.—Centers are established to cooperate with the schools in supporting and enriching the in-school program of physical education and to conduct an out-of-school program.

Study centers.—Places are set up by the school and/or the community where children can work and receive help in homework, reading, or studying. In several cities, these are located in selected homes.

Reduction of Teacher-Pupil Ratio

Many administrators are adjusting the formula used for assignment of teachers to provide a lower-than-average teacher-pupil ratio for all or part of the day in schools dealing with large numbers of disadvantaged children. Other means, such as the following, are also used:

1. Under the "McAteer Compensatory Education Program" of the State of California, some California school systems assign teachers to schools to work with selected children daily for periods varying from 45 to 50 minutes to half the school day. Assistance is given mainly in reading and related language arts, preparing and carrying out trips, and followup work.

2. "Reserve teachers" take groups of 8 to 12 children for one hour each day to help them in areas of weakness, or help the lowest reading group in a classroom for the regular reading period. They also accompany teachers on home visits, take children on trips, and assist in other ways.

3. "Master teachers" are assigned, on the basis of one to 6 to 10 inexperienced teachers, to help them and to work with small groups of children.

4. Teachers with proficiency in teaching reading are assigned to approximately 16 children or half a class for 2 hours each half day. Concentration is on language arts and social studies. These teachers also assist with the inservice education of teachers in the school.

5. Three teachers are assigned to two classrooms. The third teacher spends half of each day in each room. Emphasis is placed on language arts and/or mathematics.

6. A "supplemental teacher" takes 12 to 15 children for one-fourth of the day for whatever help is needed.

7. Teachers are assigned to reteach reading to small groups; that is, to reinforce the teaching in the regular classroom. In one city, each school has 10 weeks of such service in the fall, winter, or spring for grades 1, 2, and 3.

8. Reading centers in areas of the city take selected

individuals or small groups for remedial help for an hour or more daily.

9. Remedial reading teachers work in two grades each (1-2, 3-4, 5-6), helping children, giving demonstrations for teachers, and securing needed materials for the teaching of reading.

10. Parents are selected and trained to serve on paid time as aides in the classrooms. They assist teachers by helping children listen to tapes, use the library, and secure material; by keeping records, and by carrying out other assignments which do not require professional training. (A side effect is increased attendance at PTA meetings.)

Assistance to Staff

Additional staff services are frequently assigned or made available to schools enrolling large numbers of disadvantaged children. Some of the services found in the 16 cities are the following—terms are those used locally:

1. Counselors to work with teachers, with parents, and with children on special problems.
2. Psychiatric social worker, or psychoogist, to handle difficult children and to be available as consultant to the staff.
3. Home visitor, or school social worker to serve as liaison between school, home, and child-serving agencies.
4. Visiting nurse to work particularly on health-related problems which involve the home.
5. School nurse to work with health problems and provide services and instruction; and to serve as liaison with the home and community.
6. Language arts specialist to work in one or several schools, helping teachers focus on the language needs of the children in the class.
7. Full-time supervisor of reading.
8. Mathematics specialist to teach third-grade mathematics and help all children with library science.

9. Secretary to assist with recordkeeping and reporting.
10. Substitutes, often retired teachers, to release classroom teachers for observation, home visiting, and parent conferences.
11. Bilingual teachers to teach English to non-English-speaking children.
12. Speech specialist to correct speech defects.
13. Librarians, full or part time, to maintain and administer the library and to help teachers and children select books.
14. Resource teachers to work in art, music, physical education, and speech.
15. Teachers assigned full time to several schools to identify out-of-school educational resources, secure or prepare material for teachers, plan with the teacher and make all necessary out-of-school plans, arrange for transportation, accompany the children and teacher, involve parents, and assist with followup activities in the classroom.
16. School-community agent to work with and assist the staff; work with parents, agencies, and organizations; and organize an after-school activity program for children. In one school, this agent operates 120 once-a-week, after-school activities, such as German, French, Spanish, reading, mathematics, art, creative art, exploratory art, creative writing, model boats, and a story hour for younger children. Teachers are volunteers from the staff, high school students (mainly Future Teachers of America), and parents.
17. Supplementary teachers and college students paid to teach after school as many as 20 hours a week. Classes are in remedial reading, other language arts, library instruction, mathematics, good study habits, leadership training, and other interest enrichment areas.
18. Student teachers employed as teacher assistants when they are not practice-teaching: for example, work with individuals and small groups, and serve as library helpers and clerks.

19. College and high school student volunteers to tutor in the language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies; to operate interest clubs; and to help in other ways.
20. Settlement houses, churches, Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, the Newman Club, and other organizations, usually in cooperation with the school system, to operate study centers for children and youth. The school usually advises or assists with staff and program.
21. The Junior League and other voluntary organizations to provide opportunities for cultural experiences for children after school, on Saturday, and during the summer.

The School and Parents

This and preceding brochures in this series (20, 21) describe the general plight of parents in disadvantaged areas: prevalence of families where the mother is the sole wage earner; restricted living within a few blocks or a "compound"; harbored fear or anger from their own poor school experience; fatigue and lack of time, preventing family communication; and lack of know-how in middle-class culture, especially family rearing. However, studies have shown that most parents are interested in their children's progress in school; and "when parents are interested, children do better." This widespread conviction has caused schools to take steps to secure parental cooperation. The interest generated has led to activities which sometimes flow into adult education and community improvement. Some of the activities found useful to invite and hold the interest of parents include:

1. An informal social event is held early in the evening, with food. The social worker or community agent, as well as the children, is helpful in inducing parents to attend. Plans are made to care for young children. The setting is simple and relaxing, the speaker is able to communicate with his audience, and time is available for questions and conversation. In subsequent meetings, parents may enjoy contributing, preparing, or serving foods. In some schools, this has evolved into study programs on such topics as

child growth and rearing; the school's program and the work in a specific subject, grade, or classroom; and parents' efforts to help their children at home and at school. It has also resulted in efforts of parents to improve their own skills in reading, writing, and speaking. They frequently form groups to read together. Able and well-accepted persons among them are sought out and used as leaders or helpers.

2. Parents visit the classrooms immediately after school hours. In one case where this was the custom, parents when invited to an evening meeting literally swarmed into the classrooms and would not leave for an auditorium meeting. "The parents and children *talk* education now," said the principal. "Fear of the school has dropped off, and parents drop in voluntarily."

3. Trips are designed for parents only, to help them understand *how* to plan and *what* to look for in taking a trip with children. In one city several hundred parents took advantage of these. In addition, more than 600 parents and 60 upper-grade boys and girls assisted on the school trips.

4. Parents are engaged in class and school activities, such as helping with trips, parties, and programs; serving as teacher-aides; and helping in the halls, in the library, on the playground, and in the cafeteria.

5. Schools of different culture populations work on a common problem, then interchange information and visits. Parents make the visits a social occasion, preparing foods of their country and serving as consultants about their culture.

6. Teacher-parent conferences are scheduled regularly to promote mutual understanding of the child. Plans are made to care for younger children during these conferences.

7. A program of orientation is provided for all parents new to the school. The principal shows a series of slides entitled *Guide to Good Citizenship* made in his school and now in use citywide and in other school districts. The principal works constantly with parents and arranges for school-time teacher-parent conferences. A school child-care center supervised by mothers and older children frees the mothers for the conference.

8. To encourage parental interest, one principal told the children they might have a library card when their parents came to sign it. Most of them came. At the end of 2 weeks, he gave the cards to the others.

9. To improve home culture, a news agency was encouraged to give the school 350 papers daily. For 2 weeks the children studied the paper and news on the radio and television. A test indicated that they had learned much. Newspapers are now studied for content, and children take turns taking papers home. They are also producing a school paper for their parents.

10. Children take library books home. As soon as the supply permits, parents will be invited to check out books once a week.

11. Fifteen parents come two evenings a week to learn the basic skills. Some now want high school work in their local district.

12. Teachers and parents, in discussing how they would help each other, decided on a series of workshops at 1:40 p.m. The "Kickoff Day" was announced on the street by parents using loud speakers. Attendance was high, parents registered to assist the school in various activities, and their names were given to the teachers in charge of each activity. Teachers in turn agreed to visit homes to talk over children's progress.

Summer Opportunities

Opportunities for elementary school children to improve their skills or to engage in enrichment activities during the summer are steadily increasing. Almost all 16 cities in the study provide such opportunities. In 1964, for instance, Chicago provided summer school opportunities for 100 children in grades 1 to 6 in each of 20 elementary schools, with class size limited to 25. Fifty percent of the student membership were boys and girls who read at or about grade level. The purpose was to experiment with ways of teaching children in densely populated areas and of motivating children to learn. (4)

New Haven, Connecticut, provides a 6-week, 4-

hour daily summer school for students who are interested in "learning something for learning's sake." (29) Oakland, California, has a program for those needing to improve language skills; Baltimore, remedial work for children leaving the fourth grade who need help; Cincinnati, remedial work for children leaving grades 3 through 10, and talent development opportunities for pupils from grades 5 through 10.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

SOME PROGRAMS WERE DISCOVERED which seemed sufficiently unique to warrant special mention. Most of these had comprehensive objectives—such as the restoration of morale, prevention of discouragement, child care combined with education, and after-school activity for children and adults. Samples of such programs follow.

Boston

Junior Grades.—Children who are not ready for the subsequent grade are placed in a "junior fourth, fifth, or sixth class" for a year before being sent on. Supervisors and principals find that this arrangement has a happier and more constructive psychological effect on the pupils than when they repeat the grade.

Operation Second Chance.—Twenty sixth-grade boys who were identified as "most certain dropout candidates" were invited to take advantage of a "Second Chance" class in grades seven and eight. Every effort was made to help them succeed if they in turn agreed to attend school regularly, work hard, and create no serious discipline problems. Parents were interviewed and agreed to help.

The boys were put under the supervision of an understanding and competent teacher and principal for the 2-year period. The program was completely tailored to their needs and interests, its purpose being to prepare them to enter the ninth grade.

They came from several different schools where each of them had failed at least twice, and it was several months before they began to work as a group or to talk freely with each other and the teacher. "I could do more when they began to talk to me," said the teacher. "A one-to-one basis of exchange was needed."

The entire program was cooperatively planned. The boys were in the home room more than half of each day, where they studied reading and other language arts, mathematics, and social studies. Outside the home room the boys had eight periods of shop work each week, including sheet metal, wood, machine, and printing work; and physical education, music, art, and science. They were an integral part of the school, engaging in all its activities, such as sports, assemblies, and election.

Bulletin board notices in the classroom featured articles showing the need for education in today's world. Trips were made to businesses and industries where, by prearrangement, guides explained, demonstrated, and sometimes gave practice in a job, and talked about salaries and the need for education. The boys were impressed when a manager said, "When you graduate from high school, come back to us."

Toward the end of the second year, the boys were 15 and 16 years old and enthusiastic about school. The mean level of the total scores on their achievement test batteries placed at 6.9 (the ninth month of the sixth grade), as compared with the beginning point of 4.5; and the grade improvement scores of individuals ranged from 1.5 to 4.2 grades. Attendance was excellent. The principal stated that all the boys showed marked improvement, seemed proud of their accomplishments, and appeared much more stable. Furthermore, they wanted to go on to high school. One, already employed in a printing office, was looking forward to trade school. The principal took steps to ease the transition into high school, preparing the high school principal and teachers to receive the boys. Boys from the high school had come to orient, talk, play ball, and eat with them and had admired their accomplishments. The present principal and teacher tried to impress the boys that the responsibility for making a successful adjustment was theirs; that this opportunity, "Second Chance," had done all that was possible to develop manliness; and that the boys must continue to show that they had it.

The principal and teacher, proud as they were of the boys, remarked: "We believe the state these boys were in 2 years ago could be avoided if classes in the elementary school were small enough to give the per-

sonal touch, if the teachers were good, and if the curriculum were flexible enough to meet the needs of the children."

Chicago

Cultural Experience Program.—A coordinator secures free tickets and/or special rates all year round for children to see previews of outstanding performances at the theater, movies, circuses, puppet shows, and concerts. A limited number of free tickets are given to parents if they will take a child. The coordinator helps teachers whenever possible, and has developed a guide for parents who wish to extend their own or their children's cultural advantages.

Lighted Schoolhouse Program.—In this program, the school is used until 10 p.m. each day. The after-school phase for elementary school children provides a recreation program of skill games, crafts, and a social program of dancing and table games. A Friday evening program for parents and children is featured. This phase parallels an after-school coaching program and overlaps an adult program which provides parents with opportunities to socialize or study. It is significant that, according to the district supervisor, after-school reading is more popular than the recreation program, achievement is rising, remedial classes are fewer, and discipline is not a major problem.

New York

All-Day Neighborhood Schools.—Begun in 1936, this program is now located in 14 centers, where 7 extra teachers—one for each grade level K to 6—and a supervisor are assigned to each school, reporting at 10:40 a.m. and remaining until 5 p.m. daily. Until 3 p.m., when school hours are over, the teachers work on a definite teaching schedule with not more than three small groups of children; from 3 to 5 p.m. they conduct an activity program composed of homework study, interest clubs, individual hobbies, trips, games, reading, and other enriching pursuits.

Non-English Program.—This program was established in 1949 to devise ways to deal with the prob-

lem of educating incoming Puerto Rican children. Special coordinators and auxiliary (Spanish-speaking) teachers are assigned to the affected schools. Two important features are *Operation Understanding*, in which a corps of Puerto Rican teachers supplies firsthand information to teachers, and a visiting program which sends teachers and administrators to Puerto Rico each year. (30)

Pittsburgh

Team Teaching.—This is a project whereby a team—consisting of a leader, who is a master teacher; four regular teachers, each with a class of 36; one teacher intern, who is a college student; and one team mother, who is a parent and is paid for her time—instructs pupils in varying sizes or groups for varying periods of time. The leader teaches a full load; calls weekly meetings of the team; consults with the principal on matters of policy, space, and equipment; and is responsible generally for the success of the program. The purpose is to increase motivation, find and develop talent, broaden opportunities, and provide extra help to those who need it. Teams on the primary level are organized on grade level lines; on the intermediate level, along subject lines.

San Diego

Community Education Research Council.—The council, composed of a full-time coordinator and school and industrial personnel, keeps the curriculum up to date. Selected personnel from school and industries prepare materials on oceanography, space science, and other areas, and produce appropriate kits. The Space Kit, for example, has illustrated materials concerning such topics as "The Birth of a Missile," "How Astronauts See the Earth," "Communication," and "Health." The industry releases a scientist to assist on the project.

Film trips.—Because it was not possible to provide all the trips that seemed necessary, a central office supervisor, specialists, and generalists collaborate to produce "film trips."

TECHNIQUES USED BY TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

SCHOOLS VISITED BY STAFF MEMBERS of the Office of Education use many different techniques to motivate children and raise their level of responsibility, self-direction, and scholarship. Some of the techniques which were recommended are included here:

1. *Code of Conduct.* Children and the principal developed a behavior code for use as a guide to good citizenship in school (halls, cafeteria, classrooms), en route to school, on the playground, on street corners, on trips, and when serving as host or hostess.

2. *Child responsibilities.* Children help to take care of the schools—halls, auditorium, cafeteria, library—and the younger children. Examples:

(*a*) One school developed considerable school and civic pride among sixth graders by assigning them as general helpers in activities involving younger children. When the visitor asked the children why the school needed helpers, these were their responses:

"The teachers can't do everything."

"It's good for us and the children."

"We help children learn how to act."

"It sets a good example."

"It keeps children safe."

"We train fifth graders in what to do next year when they are helpers."

(*b*) Thirty selected sixth graders received instruction on how to tutor first-grade children in reading and writing. They were given a folio of materials, with access to a supply cupboard from which to replenish their supplies. Each was then paired with a first-grade child who needed help. The

first graders benefited because of the one-to-one relationship with an older child; the sixth graders were responsible, faithful, and enthusiastic. Some who were in the program the previous year came back twice a week to help some fifth graders.

3. *Cooperative study.* Several classrooms of the same or different grades studied a theme or unit simultaneously, creating widespread interest and making it possible to share resources, ideas, and activities.

CONCLUSION

PRACTICES DESCRIBED IN THIS BROCHURE reflect some of the efforts of thoughtful and devoted teachers and principals to raise the educational level of the disadvantaged children in their classes and schools. While educators alone cannot solve all aspects of this social problem, they are doing much to help children develop attitudes, understandings, and skills which will enable them to rise above conditions which envelop them. By so doing, educators are continuing the proud tradition set by the public school system in this Nation.

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Many excellent articles on the topic are also to be found in current professional and popular magazines.

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